

But let me first of all as we talk about Veterans' Day acknowledge the extra \$128 million that the veterans will get to expedite claims processing. If there is anything in our congressional districts that causes us great concern, it is our veterans coming in attempting to process their claims for needs that are immediate. I believe it is important to overcome that particular need.

In addition, I think it is extremely important that there is an increase in this particular legislation for veterans. I would argue to say that we can always, as I work with homeless veterans, do more for them. I am hoping as we move towards the next session and the next fiscal year, we can reemphasize the needs of our homeless veterans with whom I have worked on a regular basis.

But we are addressing some needs, and whenever I go home and interact with my community, they are always speaking about another issue and that is dealing with housing. I would like to refer to the housing for the Nation's elderly, section 202 which has received an increase, the homeless program which has been fully funded at \$1.23 billion, the housing, the HOPWA program. I might say that we will be working with HUD to ensure that those dollars get to communities that are diverse, that we ensure that those programs are spread throughout, that we are reaching the communities that are impacted. We realize that in the African American community, HIV-AIDS is the one killer in ages 25 TO 44. We need those dollars to be spread in a diverse way. We have community development block grant money, and I am delighted that is there, as well as the Superfund monies which have been funded.

As a member of the Committee on Science, Subcommittee on Space and Aeronautics, express my extreme disappointment that we have not seen fit to fully fund our Space Station and provide the extra safety and the extra crew module. We fought against this cut, and I am hoping that the administration will see the error of its ways with respect to the Space Station. We have fought long and hard, and in this time the Space Station may become even more valuable. We realize that we have to be fiscally responsible as relates to NASA, but we need to do more.

In Houston, in particular, we are very gratified that the conference has seen fit to focus on beautification. The Heights Association in Houston receiving \$100,000; to focus on recreation, \$25,000 for the Acres Home Citizen Council Recreational Complex that will enhance economic development in that area, create a whole buzz of activity, compete with of course our great sports arenas by going into a neighborhood and focusing, and recognizing that the whole Nation needs to be wired and to put in an intercity area, the home of Barbara Jordan and Nicky Leland, the Fifth Ward Technology Center in cooperation with the Hous-

ton Community College seed money of \$50,000 to help us recognize that economic development technology are interwoven. I look forward to these ideas and these monies moving forward to help build our country and as well build a better quality of life.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT).

Mr. SCOTT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the conference report for VA-HUD. The bill funds many important agencies, and much has been said about those agencies, particularly about Veterans' Affairs. But I would like to specifically recognize the hard work of the members of the conference committee for their work in approving funding increase for aeronautics research.

We know that dollar for dollar, investments in aeronautics research pays off. Every aircraft worldwide uses NASA technology, and the research center located in Hampton, Virginia, has been at the forefront of developing these cutting-edge technologies. Engineering principles developed from the past research at Langley have contributed to overall aircraft safety and efficiency, including things like wind design, noise abatement, structural integrity, and fuel efficiency. It is important to remember that these principles were developed 5, 10 and 20 years before they led to improvements in the aircraft we see today.

In recent years, NASA's research has been reduced by about one-third. Reversing that declining trend in aeronautics funding now will enable the aggressive research and technology programs that are needed to lead the United States into the 21st century, as the world's leader in aeronautics and space research, a key cornerstone of our future economic prosperity.

Again, I extend my appreciation to the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH) and the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOLLOHAN) and the other conferees for their strong support for the national investments in aeronautics research, and I urge Members to support the conference committee report.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. PRYCE of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, this is a good conference report. It balances a number of very important priorities. It protects our environment and keeps the United States at the forefront of space exploration. It provides needed funding to ensure new scientific discovery and addresses our Nation's critical housing needs.

Finally, it provides for the benefits and assistance of our Nation's veterans that they have earned and that they should enjoy. It is a fitting and timely

tribute as we prepare for Veterans' Day this November 11.

Mr. Speaker, once again our hats should be off to the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH) and the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOLLOHAN) and the entire appropriations committee. I urge a yes vote on this rule and the conference report.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The previous question was ordered.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on the conference report to accompany H.R. 2620, and that I may include tabular and extraneous material.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 2620, DEPARTMENTS OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AND INDEPENDENT AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2002

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 279, I call up the conference report on the bill (H.R. 2620) making appropriations for the Departments of Veterans Affairs and Housing and Urban Development, and for sundry independent agencies, boards, commissions, corporations, and offices for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2002, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the conference report is considered as having been read.

(For conference report and statement, see proceedings of the House of November 6, 2001, at page H7787.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH) and the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOLLOHAN) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH).

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege to present for consideration of the House the conference report on H.R. 2620, the VA-HUD and Independent Agencies Appropriations Act for 2002.

In the interest of time, I will try to be brief. I would like, however, to begin by saying that this is a good bill. I think the fact that we had a unanimous vote on the rule is symbolic of what is to come. Like those presented in each of the past few years, it is very much a solid, bipartisan effort of the